



Bullet Times Two

By Sandy Roca

No Virginia, there is nothing wrong with your TV set. Or your vision. Read on.

The motorcycle genre known as British Big Single has a long and storied history. The Ariel Red Hunter. Norton ES2 and Manx . Matchless G-50 and G-80. BSA Goldstar and Victor. Vincent Comet. Velocette. Panther. Even the cute li'l Triumph Cub. Among others. Quite an illustrious list. I can almost smell the Castor R racing oil as I write this.

Include in that pleasant pantheon the Royal Enfield Bullet. Which sadly like so many other British marques died during the nineteen sixties but has since been miraculously reborn via a renewed design and production effort in India, of all places.

Here is the latest chapter in the annals of Bullet-dom. And it is a real doozy. What your orbs are feasting upon is an amazing 998 cc vee twin that uses two Enfield Bullet single 500 cc cylinders and heads.

This marvel is the creation of Aniket Vardhan. He is a talented high-energy motor maven, masterful



machinist and industrial designer out of Columbus Ohio. Vardhan has been working on bringing his of a double barrel Bullet, which he calls the Musket. into a practical reality for several years. It has now arrived. And how!

In addition to two standard 500 cc barrels, heads, pistons, valve trains, etc. etc. the machine involves a special crankcase and lower end to mate all the two-fer stuff together. The vee-twin unique parts are made to the highest standards with the latest CAD design tools and CNC manufacturing methods.

Aniket has sagely opted to use -- as much as possible -- standard Enfield Bullet parts. There is a simple-to-fabricate minimal frame stretch to accommodate the second cylinder. The result is a reliable, tractable and practical machine that weighs scant more than an original Bullet, but with twice the displacement. What kind of performance improvement? Well, do the math. Your seat of the pants won't lie.

Two prototype motorcycles have built and intensively road tested by Vardhan. A huge amount of time and effort went into making numerous detail improvements as he went through the process. The terms painstaking and laborious come to mind. What you see here is the first production bike. The result is so well put together it might well pass to the uninitiated as a standard British classic motorcycle. Until you fire it up and twist the wick. I would characterize the experience as rather Vincent-like in terms of sound and retina-detaching acceleration. Kick starting is surprisingly easy thanks to compression releases. And, handling? A true delight! Think, classic Brit roadholder, on steroids.



Vardhan -- being the best kind of twenty first century kind of guy -- uses the internet to keep those interested in his efforts informed. He blogs regularly and his site is loaded with tons of photos, info and details. If you would like to have a 998 Musket twin in your garage, he can provide you with parts, kits and sub assemblies to speed and ease the job. See all the skinny at:

<http://www.musketvtwin.com/>

<http://musketmagnum.blogspot.com/>

So what we have here is a modern motorcycle, manufactured in India, and then remanufactured in the good ole USA. Under those parameters, does it strictly qualify as a classic vintage bike? Well no. But how about in Spirit?

Hell yes! ■

